

HERBERT HENRY McKenley, O.M. rated as one of, if not Jamaica's greatest ever athlete is dead.

The man hailed by many as one of the most outstanding 400 metres runners ever died shortly before 6:00 p.m. yesterday at the Tony Thwaites Wing of the University Hospital of the West Indies, where he had been admitted just over two weeks ago. McKenley was 85.

McKenley's career was studded with outstanding achievements. His greatest came in 1952 at the Helsinki Olympics when he inspired a Jamaican quartet to a gold medal in the 4x400 metres in an amazing world record three minutes 3.9 seconds.

OUTSTANDING ATHLETE

A Calabar old boy, McKenley was one of the first outstanding Jamaican athletes to impress at the Olympic level. In addition to his relay gold he won three individual silver medals.

In London, in 1948, he was second to compatriot Arthur Wint in the 400m and four years later in Helsinki he was second again in the same event, this time to another Jamaican, George Rhoden. He was also narrowly beaten in the 100 metres final.

The great Jamaican also held several world records for the 400 metres and 400 yards. On July 2, 1948 he became the first man to run the 400 metres under 46 seconds when he clocked a hand-timed 45.9 in Milwaukee, United States.

At Calabar McKenley was an outstanding all-round sportsman. Apart from his excellent performance for the school on the track, he had also represented

PLEASE SEE **GREAT**, A3

GREAT

CONTINUED FROM A1

the school at football and cricket, topping the bowling averages in the Sunlight Cup competition and playing with distinction for the All-Sunlight team

When the time came for McKenley to hang up his spikes, it was by no means the end of his sporting career. He turned his attention to the administration of the sport, serving as president of the Jamaica Amateur Athletics Association (JAAA) from 1978 to 1984, during which he secured numerous scholarships for Jamaicans to study and compete overseas.

MONUMENTAL CONTRIBUTION

He also gave his time and talent to the training of young Jamaicans so that they too, could follow in his fabulous footsteps.

Mike Fennell, president of Jamaica Olympic Association (JOA) and Howard Aris, president of the JAAA, both paid tribute to McKenley yesterday.

BIN MCKENLEY, HERB



MCKENLEY

"A very, very sad loss for sports in general and athletics in particular," Fennell said.

According to Fennell, McKenley made a monumental contribution to track and field: "He was always looking out for opportunities for young athletes and how they could lift their performances and better themselves. He was a great mentor, a great motivator.

LEFT A VOID

"One thing I would love to put across at the time of his death, is that the wonderful achievements that we are getting today are a part of the legacy, and the foundation that he has established through his own exploits on the track. Our

thoughts are with his family, his wife Beverly and his children."

Aris said McKenley's death had left a void which could not be filled.

"He was a great Jamaican athlete, a great Jamaican sports administrator. He will be sadly missed. Herb exemplified what I call the essence of patriotism and nationalism. He put Jamaica above everything else.

"He used his tremendous outreach and contacts worldwide to keep putting Jamaica and Jamaicans in positions where they can be exposed. His greatness was not only on the field of competition but also in the halls and corridors of power."

National Library of Jamaica